

THE ASSESSMENT OF THE ANXIETY OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO ARE LEARNING TURKISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN TURKEY IN TERM OF CERTAIN VARIABLES

Türkiye’de Türkçeyi Yabancı Dil Olarak Öğrenen Ortaöğretim Öğrencilerinin Hedef Dile Yönelik Kaygılarının Bazı Değişkenler Açısından Değerlendirilmesi

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to assess the anxiety connected with target language of the high school students who are learning Turkish as a foreign language in terms of certain variables. The study used FLCAS - *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale* that was developed by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) and was made validity and reliability by Horwitz (1986) as a data collection instrument and was made Turkish version of the scale (Gülsün). Alpha reliability coefficient of this scale has been found as .97. The participants are 314 students (from 27 countries) who are learning Turkish in GİH High School in Kayseri-Turkey. 314 students’ responses were studied. The data were analysed using means, standard deviation, Tukey and t-test. Also the success situation of the students was defined according to mean of marks in the Turkish Language at the end of semester. According to the space of 0-44 was accepted ‘not successful’; the space of 45-100 was accepted ‘successful’. According to the space of 0-54 (1), between 55-69 (2), between 70-84 (3), and between 85-100 (4) have been recorded and described as low, moderate, good, very good. This study showed that the anxiety of the students who learn Turkish as a foreign language does not change with student degree, and student success status in Turkish language, but that alters with the purpose of learning Turkish, and their nationality.

Keywords: *Language learning, high school students, Turkish learning a foreign language, foreign language anxiety, student success.*

Özet

Bu araştırmanın amacı, Türkçeyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen ortaöğretim öğrencilerinin hedef dile yönelik kaygılarını bazı değişkenler açısından değerlendirmektir. Çalışmada Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) tarafından geliştirilen ve Horwitz (1986) tarafından geçerlik ve güvenilirlik yapılan YDTÖ – Yabancı Dil Tutum Ölçeği (FLCAS - *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale*) kullanılmıştır. Gülsün, ölçeği Türkçeye çevirerek Türkçe versiyonunu oluşturmuştur. Ölçeğin Alpha güvenilirlik katsayısı .97 olarak hesaplanmıştır. Araştırmaya katılan katılımcılar Türkiye – Kayseri’de bulunan Uluslar arası Germirli İmam Hatip Lisesi’ne 27 farklı ülkeden gelen ve geldikleri ilk dönem Türkçe öğrenen orta öğretim öğrencileridir. Katılımcılar. Katılımcılardan elde edilen verilerin analizinde ortalama, standart sapma, Tukey ve t-testi kullanılmıştır. Aynı zamanda dönem sonunda öğrencilerin Türkçe dersi başarı ortalamaları incelenerek başarı da durumları da değerlendirilmiştir. Bu çerçevede baz alınan ölçüt aralıkları 0-44 aralığı ‘başarısız’; 45-100 aralığı ‘başarılı’ olarak kabul edilmiştir. Buna göre, 0-54 (1), 55-69 arası (2), 70-84 arası (3), ve 85-100 arası (4) olarak kaydedilmiştir. Kaydedilen veriler ‘düşük’, ‘orta’, ‘iyi’, ve ‘çok iyi’ olarak tanımlanmıştır. Çalışmaya katılan 314 öğrenciden 25 öğrenci düşük başarı, 82 öğrenci orta düzeyde başarı, 207 öğrenci ise iyi ve çok iyi düzeyde başarı göstermiştir. Yüksek başarı düzeyindeki öğrenci sayısı düşük başarı düzeyindeki öğrenci sayısından fazladır. Bu çalışma Türkçeyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen ortaöğretim öğrencilerinin kaygı durumlarının Türkçe dersindeki sınıf seviyesi ve başarı durumları açısından farklılık olmadığını; fakat Türkçe öğrenme amaçları ve milliyetleri ile farklılık gösterdiğini ortaya koymaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: *Dil öğrenme, lise öğrencileri, bir yabancı dil olarak Türkçe öğrenme, yabancı dil kaygısı, öğrenci başarısı.*

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INTRODUCTION

All communities in every period of history have given attention in order to provide better and more easily agreements of the people friendly to the language teaching. A language is taught to the members of the nation, nearby residents, compatriots living in different geographical area, fans and strangers etc. (Karakuş 2006). To use a language different from the language its own that makes it more important, superior and favors then the others. To do this, individuals are searching for ways to learn a foreign language (Göçer 2009).

Turkish is now among the top five in the world in terms of geographical area and the number of spoken people who speak Turkish. In addition, the Turkish language is among the oldest. Infrastructure for teaching Turkish as a foreign language built hundreds of years ago. However, Turkish could not been be done the desired in the languages learned by foreigners, yet (Karakuş 2006).

In recent years, the work of teaching Turkish as a foreign language and mother tongue gained considerable momentum. Undergraduate programs of Turkish Higher Education Council have an independent course (Turkish education program) teaching Turkish as a foreign language. In addition, many post-graduate courses at the universities have offered teaching Turkish as a foreign language. Under Gazi, Ankara, Dokuz Eylül etc. universities in Turkey established the Turkish Learning Centers and, was prepared training book kit for use in (TÖMER 2002; 2006). TİKA also prepared a set of language teaching to be used in teaching Turkish to foreigners.

Learning a foreign language, the interest in the target language, desire, motivation, attitudes, and anxiety have a significant impact. Each of these variables as a direct or indirect effect of foreign language learning. Educators have conducted various studies on these conditions on effective language teaching and learning. "Students' and teachers' beliefs about language learning (Kern 1995)", "The Attitude toward Target Language of High School Students Learning Turkish as A Foreign Language (Göçer 2009)"; "Psychology in Foreign Language Teaching (McDonough 1986)"; "Anxiety and Learning a Foreign Language: Formation a Theoretical Description (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1989)" ... some of these studies. Anxiety for foreign language as they learn a foreign language of students was a lot of research in terms of some of the variables examined. Doğan (2008), 'Effect of Foreign Language Anxiety of High School Students' on their English studies' and Ergür (2004), 'Anxiety in Process of Foreign Language Learning etc. studies have attempted to demonstrate the effect of foreign language learning of anxiety. Engin (2009), 'The Success of Second Language Learning and Motivation' he at this work has examined the correlation between motivation and second language learning success. Gülsün (1997), conducted research on the relationship between anxiety and achievement of foreign language students. Dalkılıç (2001), 'A Research on The Role of Anxiety in Second Language Learning' with the study investigated the effect of anxiety on foreign language learning. In addition to these, Zhao Na (2007), Batumlu and Erden (2007), Xu and Li (2010), such as many researchers have done research on the impact to foreign language learning of anxiety.

Foreign language learning success, belief of students, the level of motivation, affective state, attitudes, and expectations etc. are closely related to individual characteristics. The foreign language anxiety holds an important place in affective states as similar to other individual differences emerges as an important variable affecting the success in language learning (Aydın ve Zengin 2008). There are three types of anxiety in language learning: Anxiety caused by personality; about having a worried creature (Rod Ellis (1994) cit. Sasson, 2010). The second type of anxiety has caused you anxiety such as the learner's exam or an oral presentation. The third type of anxiety is event-driven anxiety that

arising from the special learning state such as activities, including reading, speaking, or understanding and competencies required activities (Sasson 2010). Anxiety a state-dependent is considered to be an integral part of the process of learning a foreign language. Students are forced to learn in the language. Therefore, they are unable to express themselves well enough. And they think their wits have shown no. Exposure of this kind of anxiety prevents students from using the target language correctly. (Ergür 2004). Ellis states that anxiety is related to the following factors (cit. Sasson 2010): 1. Learners have a competitive nature. 2. Teachers threatening questions. 3. The lack of relaxing second language learning environment.

According to Na, anxiety has been adopted the most important of emotional factors at the acquisition of a second language (2007). Horwitz, Horwitz ve Cope (1986), Horwitz (1986), Gülsün (1997), Dalkılıç (2001), Sertçetin (2006), Zhao Na (2007), Batumlu & Erden (2007), Runjiang Xu & Yucheng Li (2010) etc. many researchers have conducted a lot of research in order to put in the relationship between the variables with anxiety in foreign language learning.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this study is to assess in terms of certain variables the anxiety connected with target language of the high school students who are learning Turkish as a foreign language. In this context, were sought the following questions.

Problem statement

Do same certain variables (i.e. grade level, purpose of the language learning, and the country of origin) make any difference in determining the anxiety level of secondary school students who are learning Turkish as a foreign language in Turkey?

Sub-problems

1. Does academic achievement make any difference in foreign language classroom anxiety of learners who are learning Turkish as a foreign language?
2. Does grade level make any difference in foreign language anxiety of students who are learning Turkish as a foreign language?
3. Does the nationality or origin make any difference in foreign language anxiety of students who are learning Turkish as a foreign language?

METHOD

The survey method was used in the research. Scanning model is a research approaches aiming to describe a situation as it was in the past or that there were still. Research subjects attempted to define the event; person or object in its own terms and as in this model (Karasar, 2006). In this study, recommendations have been developed by interpreting findings that are reached from the data obtained.

Participants

The working group consisting of 314 students (participants) is the foreign students studying in Turkey. Research conducted on the participants studying in Kayseri - Kocasinan Germirli State High School 9, 10 and 11 classes came from different countries in 2010-2011 academic years.

Collection and analysis of the data

The study used *FLCAS - Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale* that was developed by Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) and was made validity and reliability by Horwitz (1986) as a data collection instrument and was made Turkish version of the scale Gülsün, (1997), Dalkılıç (2001) an Batumlu & Erden (2007).

The survey consists of two parts. In the first part, it was intended to collect personal information such as participants learn goals, gender, nationality and grade level the Turkish as a foreign language, gender, nationality and intended to collect personal information, such as grade level. In the other chapter, it is located in the Turkish version of FLCAS - Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale). The scale consists of 33 items. 8 of them (1, 9, 14, 18, 24, 27, 29, 32) communication anxiety; 9 of them (3, 7, 13, 15, 20, 23, 25, 31, 33) the fear of negative evaluation; and 5 of them (2, 8, 10, 19, 21) for test anxiety. The remaining 11 items grouped under the name of Turkish-class anxiety. For each item from '1 - Strongly Agree' to '5 - Strongly Disagree' with the option to up-grade 5-point Likert scale questions were asked to the participants. On the reliability of the Turkish version of the scale that prepared by the Gülsün (1997) was conducted. Scale to the 32 students applied twice with an interval of 30 days. Alpha reliability coefficient of this scale has been found as .97. Then, the survey of Turkish as a foreign language learners were 314 high school students. Students' anxiety scores were analyzed gender, nationality (country of origin), grade level, purpose, and success etc. variables in learning a foreign language. Success in carrying out the situation, are used the final grade point averages Turkish lesson of the first period of education in Turkey. Note charts showing the status of student achievement and class pass book data was obtained from the National Education Directorate and with the permission of the school administration. Note the mean was given measurement and evaluation according to the regulations. (From 0 to 54, 1; from 55 to 69, 2; from 70 to 84, 3 and from 85 to 100, 4). Analyses were made in accordance with these intervals. In the study group according to the level classes 9th grade students '1'; 10th grade students '2' and 11th grade students '3' treated and analyzes made according to this level.

Analysis has been performed with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 11.5 (SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL, USA). In the analysis, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, t-test, Tukey test and one-way analysis of variance statistical methods were used.

FINDINGS

Table 1/1. ANOVA One-Way Analysis Of Variance Results of Impact the Achievement of Turkish Anxiety with

| <i>Behavior Domain</i> | <i>Data Groups</i> | <i>The Sum of Squares</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>The Mean of Squares</i> | <i>F</i> | <i>p</i> |
|------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|----------|----------|
| <i>Anxiety</i> | GA | 83,827 | 3 | 27,942 | .130 | .942 |
| | GI | 66742,339 | 310 | 215,298 | | |
| | Total | 66826,166 | 313 | | | |

As it is seen in the Table 1/1, there is no significant difference between anxieties of the Turkish course and the level of students' success.

Table 1/2. Descriptive Analysis Results Represents the Success of Students according to Turkish Anxiety

| Variables / Groups | Anxiety | | |
|------------------------|---------|----------|----------------|
| | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| Group 1 (Low) | 25 | 106,9200 | 13,31015 |
| Group 2 (Moderate) | 82 | 106,2439 | 12,07238 |
| Group 3 (Intermediate) | 108 | 107,3519 | 16,35032 |
| Group 4 (Very good) | 99 | 107,5051 | 15,01045 |
| Total | 314 | 107,0764 | 14,61171 |

As it is seen in the Table 1/2, very few of the students the success of is low in the survey. However, more than half of the students to succeed are positive, good and very good level. This situation is not high anxiety levels may be called for the Turkish course.

Table 2/1. One-Way Analysis of Variance ANOVA Results Regarding Effect to the Target Language Anxiety of Purposes Turkish Language Learning of Students

| Behavior Domain | Data Groups | The Sum of Squares | SD | The Mean of Squares | F | p* |
|-----------------|-------------|--------------------|-----|---------------------|--------|------|
| Anxiety | GA | 2504,472 | 3 | 834,824 | 4,023* | .008 |
| | GI | 64321,693 | 310 | 207,489 | | |
| | Total | 66826,166 | 313 | | | |

*p<.05

As it is seen in the Table 2/1, difference was found between students' anxiety of the target language with learning Turkish as a Foreign Language. In order to test, origin of the difference is given TUKEY test results in Table 2/3.

Table 2/2. Descriptive Analysis Results Regarding Students' Anxiety according to Purposes Turkish Language Learning of Them

| Variables | Anxiety | | |
|-------------------|---------|----------|----------------|
| | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| Purpose 1 | 75 | 110,8667 | 18,26704 |
| Purpose 2 | 54 | 108,2963 | 12,23609 |
| Purpose 3 | 156 | 106,0128 | 13,30486 |
| Purpose 4 (Other) | 29 | 100,7241 | 12,32853 |
| Total | 314 | 107,0764 | 14,61171 |

As it is seen in the Table 2/2, 'What is the purpose of learning Turkish?' The question was asked to students. 75 students, 'I'm learning Turkish as a Foreign Language to be successful in exams (YOS, TCS, school exams and so on.'; 54 student, 'I'm learning Turkish as a Foreign Language to use Turkish as a foreign language in everyday life, and

in order to enrich my social life.’; 156 students responded that ‘I’m learning Turkish as a Foreign Language both to use in everyday life, in order to enrich my social life and to pass the exams.’ 29 students in the language learning purposes stated as follows. ‘I’m learning to learn a lot more the Turkish as a foreign language.’, ‘I really like to learn Turkish as a foreign language.’, ‘My tongue is close to Turkish and I’m learning Turkish as a foreign language.’, ‘to go and to be a Turkish teacher in my own country I’m learning Turkish as a foreign language.’, ‘to see higher education and to study theology in Turkey for this purpose I’m learning Turkish as a foreign language.’ etc. special terms.

Table 2/3. TUKEY Test Results Regarding Students’ Anxiety with Purposes of Learning Turkish as a Foreign Language of Them

| Behavior Domain | I Purpose | J Purpose | The difference between the means (I-J) | p (Sig.) |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------|--|----------|
| Anxiety | 1,00 | 2,00 | 2,570 | .750 |
| | | 3,00 | 10,142* | .008 |
| | | 4,00 | 4,853 | .080 |
| | 2,00 | 3,00 | 7,572 | .104 |
| | | 4,00 | 2,283 | .747 |
| | 3,00 | 4,00 | 5,288 | .268 |

*p<.05

As it is seen in the Table 2/3, was found significant difference between the anxiety of the target language and students’ language learning purposes. Turkish students’ anxiety levels are different according to the purpose of learning Turkish as a foreign language was examined. A significant difference was found. This difference is found to be declared first objective statement (‘I’m learning Turkish as a Foreign Language to be successful in exams (YOS, TCS, school exams and so on.) with stated third objective statement (‘I’m learning Turkish as a Foreign Language to use Turkish as a foreign language in everyday life, and in order to enrich my social life.’).

The difference determined as favor of the purpose expression (‘I’m learning Turkish as a Foreign Language to be successful in exams (YOS, TCS, school exams and so on.’).

Table 3. T-test Results Regarding Anxiety of Target Language according to the Variable That Represents the Country of Origin of Students

| Behavior Domain | Variables | N | X | S | t | p* |
|-----------------|-----------|-----|--------------|----------|--------|------|
| Anxiety | 1 | 83 | 110,819 3 | 16,06021 | 2,749* | .006 |
| | 2 | 231 | 105,731 6 | 13,84626 | | |

*p<.05

As it is seen in the Table 3, found significantly difference at the students’ anxiety according to the nationality or origin. Investigated averages of the groups. The difference between the means of the groups was found. This appears to be due to the high average of the first group. Normally, the first group (The students from Turkish Republics) the

average level of anxiety should be lower than the average of second group (students from other countries). The level of anxiety is higher the students from Turkish Republics than students from other countries is significant. Significant that higher average of anxiety of students from Turkish Republics than students from other countries.

Table 4/1. Descriptive Analysis Results Regarding Anxiety of Learning Turkish as a Foreign Language According To the Variable That Represents Students' Grade Level

| Variables | Anxiety | | |
|--------------------------|---------|----------|----------------|
| | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| Group 1 (ninth grade) | 81 | 106,6543 | 16,36166 |
| Group 2 (tenth grade) | 94 | 106,7447 | 15,28998 |
| Group 3 (eleventh grade) | 139 | 107,5468 | 13,08070 |
| Total | 314 | 107,0764 | 14,61171 |

As it is seen in the Table 4/1, there is no difference between students' anxiety Turkish as a foreign language according to grade level. Normally be expected to be a difference in the anxiety first period of a language is learned according to later on. There is no significant difference between ninth grade students and the eleventh grade students' anxiety. This situation is in favor of the ninth grade students.

Table 4/2. ANOVA One-Way Analysis of Variance Results Regarding Anxiety of Turkish as a Foreign Language according to Students' Grade Level

| Behavior Domain | Data Groups | The Sum of Squares | SD | The Mean of Squares | F | p |
|-----------------|-------------|--------------------|-----|---------------------|------|------|
| Anxiety | GA | 55,526 | 2 | 27,763 | .129 | .879 |
| | GI | 66770,639 | 311 | 214,697 | | |
| | Total | 66826,166 | 313 | | | |

As it is seen in the Table 4/2, As a result of a one-way ANOVA analysis of variance, there was no difference between students' anxiety about Turkish as a foreign language according to grade level.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Giving a brief review of literature on the teaching of a foreign language anxiety Aydın ve Zengin, breeds anxiety factors were summarized as follows: students' proficiency levels, test practices, teachers' attitudes, level of difficulty of foreign language courses, students' the ability levels in language and cultural differences... (2008). Many people claim to have a mental block against learning a foreign language, although these same people may be good learners in many ways, strongly motivated, and have a sincere liking for speakers of the target language (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope 1986).

There is significant difference between anxieties of the Turkish as a foreign language and the level of students' success. According to Aydın and Zengin are low achievement levels of students who have high anxiety levels (2008). In other words, students with low or

acceptable level of foreign language anxiety are more successful in foreign language teaching (Öner ve Gedikoğlu 2007). The research involved 314 students, among these 25 students with low achievement; the success of the mid-82 students, 207 students in its success was seen as good to excellent. The number of students with high achievement were found to be positive than the number of students who success is lower.

According to MacIntyre and Gardner, Students' language learning anxiety arises as a result of the adverse experienced situation in process (1989). According to Öner and Gedikoğlu Students may be much more concerned about the difficulty of pronunciation of the target language, language, lack of information about the structure etc. reasons in the classroom (2007). In this study, the success of the number of students is high. Therefore, said that is low Turkish levels of anxiety of the students. In addition, there is no significant difference between the students' concerns about Turkish as a foreign language according to grade level. This condition is also related to students' achievement levels. This difference was seen "*I'm learning to be successful YÖS (EFS - Examination of Foreign Students), TCS (ETRC - Examination of the Turkish Republic and relatives Communities) etc. exams and in school exams.*" statement in favor of those who say.

'What is your purpose learning Turkish?' question were asked to the students. 75 students, 'I'm learning Turkish as a Foreign Language to be successful in exams (YOS, TCS, school exams and so on. '; 54 student, 'I'm learning Turkish as a Foreign Language to use Turkish as a foreign language in everyday life, and in order to enrich my social life. '; 156 students responded that 'I'm learning Turkish as a Foreign Language both to use in everyday life, in order to enrich my social life and to pass the exams.' More than half of the working group would like to learn Turkish with a social purpose. There is positive such a purpose.

According to the origin of country variables, were found significant differences between students' anxiety. The average of Anxiety of students from the Turkish Republics is higher than students from other countries. This situation was also significant.

There is no difference between students' anxiety and Turkish as a foreign language according to grade level. There is no significant difference between ninth grade students and the eleventh grade students' anxiety. This situation is in favor of the ninth grade students.

Recommendations

First of all, teachers who teach Turkish as a foreign language should remove the anxiety of the students against the target language. Achievements of individuals with low levels of anxiety higher than the success of those who are overly anxious. In this regard, must be specified having the worry of making a mistake in the target language to the students. Both times within the course and off course should be seen as an opportunity mistake of the students in language teaching. These errors should be a constructive manner to students.

The most important factor in learning a foreign language is to have a desire to learn in the light of an objective. Students must learn Turkish as a foreign language both to be successful in the examinations, to be good for their careers, and to enrich their lives as well as social. In this regard, the teachers who teach Turkish as a foreign language motivating their students well for such a purpose.

Students could learn better Turkish must be provided to be effective in the classroom and participate in extra-curricular in different social activities. The chances of a comfortable way to express what they have learned are captured. Students are captured a chance to express freely what they have learned.

The students learning Turkish as a foreign language should be increased interact with each other. In addition, opportunities should be created interaction with native speakers of Turkish friends. Students should be encouraged such activities. In addition, need to be prepared texts, compiled in a special little story books etc. for the students learning Turkish as a foreign language, and must be met this kind of needs of the students.

Teaching Turkish as a foreign language in Turkey, need to carry out in accordance with international norms. To do this, the training of qualified teachers who to teach Turkish as a foreign language should be prioritized. Therefore, should be opened department of teacher training in Turkish as a foreign language in Turkish education departments of the universities with appropriate infrastructure.

Notes (Abbreviations and definitions)

GİHL: State High School

TÖMER: Turkish Learning, Research and Practice Center

YÖS: University Entrance Examination for International Students

TİKA: Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency

TCS: The Examination of Turkish Republics and Related Communities

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